GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2943
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2015
Women for Scientific Research
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any task force has been constituted for promotion of women talent in scientific research;

(b) if so, the details and status thereof;

(c) whether the Government has approved and finalised the report submitted by the said task force on women in science;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;

(e) whether the Government proposes to induct more women talent in the scientific research in the country; and
(f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(SHRI.Y. S. CHOWDARY)

(a) Yes, Madam.

(b) In 2005 the Government appointed a Task force for Women in Science under the chairpersonship of Dr. Mehtab Bamji, Retd. Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, to suggest measures which could significantly enhance the number of women pursuing a career in science and technology and also suggest suitable gender enabling & empowering measures for working women scientists.

(c) Yes, Madam.

(d) The task force had several rounds of discussions in different parts of the country followed by a national level brain-storming held at Delhi which was inaugurated by the then President of India- Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil. The report of this Task Force was published by the Department of Science & Technology and circulated widely. The Task Force made the following recommendations:
1. Fostering and supporting women resources in S&T:
A. Affirmative action to improve women's ratios
i) Introduce time-bound recruitment target system (TRS)
ii) Women representation in search/hiring committees
iii) Addressing proactively the unwritten/irrational barriers on employment of spouses
iv) Women-friendly proceedings of search/selection/hiring committees
v) Priority to women candidates in part-time jobs/jobs with flexible working hours and those workable from home.
vi) Many of these recommendations were included in the Memorandum of Expenditure Finance Committee of the recently launched KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) programme which is now being implemented by the Department of Science & Technology.
B. Enabling measures for career advancement and re-entry
i) Target research programs for women scientists
ii) Refresher training & mentorship programmes for women scientists for re-entry in R&D careers after a career break
C. Breaking the glass ceiling
i) Promote women scientists as science planners and managers
D. Support related issues at workplace
i) Financial support for improvement of overall generic facilities such as crÃ¨ches, toilets, campus housing and safe transportation for post-docs and scientists
ii) Compliance of the Supreme Court guidelines
iii) Separate procedure for handling complaints of harassment by women scientists against the heads of the institutions
iv) Provision for air travel even for women who are not eligible/particularly in difficult/far-flung/isolated areas
2. Measures to attract girls into science careers
i) Summer/winter science camps for girls who have opted for science
ii) Well-planned role-model programmes with successful women scientists
iii) Special fellowship scheme for girl toppers in university examinations
iv) Safe hostel accommodation in towns & cities
v) Free/subsidized residential science schools for girls

vi) Opportunities for closer interaction for school or college students with women scientists during scientific conferences
vii) Educational reforms
viii) Reinforcing representation of girls and women in science text books
3. New policies/rules and initiatives
i) National level gender/segregated data collection/annual up-gradation and processes monitoring
ii) Institute transformation award
iii) From maternity leave to family leave
iv) Salary-linked childcare allowance in the absence of crÃ¨che on campus
v) Gender unit in all the state council for science, technology and environment
vi) Establishment/augmentation of infrastructure of women's universities
vii) Promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment for women scientists
The recommendations of this Task Force were broadly included in the recently launched KIRAN (Knowledge Involvement in Research Advancement through Nurturing) programme which is now being implemented by the Department of Science & Technology.

(e) Yes, Madam.

(f) Knowledge Involvement Research Advancement through Nurturing (KIRAN) Programme is being implemented by the Department of Science & Technology to provide career opportunities to those women scientists who had a break in their career due to various familial responsibilities in order to bring them back to mainstream. It is primarily aimed at gender parity in Science & Technology sector by inducting more women talent in the research & development domain through various programmes, namely, Women Fellowship Schemes [i.e. Women Scientist Scheme-A (WOS-A), Women Scientist Scheme-B (WOS-B) and Women Scientist Scheme-C (WOS-C), and Institutional support through Consolidation of University Research through Innovation and Excellence in Women Universities (CURIE)] scheme besides training them in Entrepreneurship Development and Science Communication and Mobility Scheme. Further, they are also encouraged to avail of capacity building schemes related to basic research, societal development and self-employment.

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